

142. The fodder reserves of the West Thána Division being natural meadows, and conveniently situated along the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway line in the Umbargaon, Dáhánu, Máhim and Sálsette ranges for the export of grass to Bombay, showed a further tendency of still increasing in value, as will appear from the details given in the following comparative statement:—

No.	Range.	Area in		Revenue during		Average per Acre.		REMARKS.
		1891-92.	1892-93.	1891-92.	1892-93.	1891-92.	1892-93.	
		Acres.	Acres.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	
1	Sálsette	1,387	1,276	767	749	0 8 10	0 9 4	
2	Máhim	2,173	2,173	9,517	10,701	4 6 0	4 14 9	
3	Dáhánu	2,800	2,800	505	955	0 4 9	0 5 0	
4	Umbargaon	256	256	408				
	Total	6,616	6,505	11,197	12,405	1 11 1	1 14 6	

143. In Surat the extraction of grass from closed areas is very limited, as its quality is very poor, and consequently the revenue derived therefrom is inconsiderable. The Dángs would produce an enormous quantity of grass but for the determined way in which these forests are fired year after year. No appliances at our disposal, however, would make the export of grass remunerative from these forests to parts of Surat and Khándosh, in which fodder is scarce at times and always dear.

144. It appears that the Panch Maháls "birs" have not revived from the drought of 1887 which killed the more valuable species, and it is stated that the process of ousting the latter by the inferior kinds commenced then has not stopped yet. The receipts were, however, only Rs. 26 less than in the previous year; the figures being Rs. 1,329 as against Rs. 1,355.

(2). *Grazing.*

145. The number of animals of different kinds grazing free within forest limits cannot be stated accurately until the grazing rules published under Government Resolution No. 3595, dated 23rd May 1890, are uniformly applied to all the districts of this Circle and the owners compelled to take out passes in conformity therewith. The number shown in Form No. 55 (276,082) does not appear to have been exaggerated; however, it is probably under the mark than over when it is taken into consideration that the agricultural stock of the Thána, Surat and Panch Maháls districts comes to 1,128,003 according to the latest return. Thus by exercising the privilege of free grazing the agricultural population in the vicinity of the forests are richer by over ($1\frac{3}{4}$) one and three-fourth lákhs of rupees,

146. A comparison is made, in the following statement, of the number of animals licensed for grazing at full and privileged rates during the year 1891-92 and 1892-93;—

No.	Division.	Number of Animals.		Amount of fees paid.	
		1891-92.	1892-93.	1891-92.	1892-93.
				Rs.	Rs.
1	East Thána...	9,476	4,430	8,505	3,682
2	West Thána	2,411	1,018	3,141	1,477
3	Surat	2,689	739	3,135	853
4	Panch Maháls	17,597	5,231	15,734	4,307
	Total	32,173	11,418	30,515	10,319

The decrease in East Thána is very probably due to village officers having put too liberal an interpretation on the term "free cattle." In West Thána it would appear that the fees are being collected with more circumspection than in the previous year. The falling off in the Panch Mabáls is attributed to the exclusion of "foreign" cattle in the early part of the year.

(3). *Miscellaneous Produce.*

147. Satisfactory arrangements were made during the year to carry out the instructions issued in Government Resolution No. 9846, dated 15th December 1892, to regulate the collection of minor forest products in the Thána and Surat districts. The proposals made by the Divisional Forest Officers were, as a rule, accepted *in toto* by Revenue Officers, and will hardly require any modification for a few years to come.

148. In Thána it was thought proper, having regard to local conditions and past results, to keep the exploitations of myrabolams, hirdas (*Terminalia chebula*), apta leaves (*Bauhinia racemosa*), toddy palm leaves (*Borassus flabelliformis*) and fruits and beheda nuts (*Terminalia belerica*) under effective control, leaving the collection of other products, such as jungle fruits, honey, wax, gum, karvi, &c., free and unrestricted to the wild tribes and people of forest villages. Further, these classes were permitted to collect apta leaves and fruits and leaves of brab trees for their *bond fide* own use; the latter products were given at the discretion of the Divisional Forest Officers only.

149. The value of the myrabolams farm has considerably diminished in value during the year, as the fruit produced by trees standing on occupied uplands has ceased to be a part of the forest revenue owing to Government in their Resolution No. 10087, dated 23rd December 1892, having reserved no fruit-bearing trees. The receipts in consequence fell from Rs. 6,020 in 1891-92 to Rs. 907 in 1892-93.

150. Of the two trees, apta (*Bauhinia racemosa*) and tembhurni (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), whose leaves are used as wrappers for cigarettes by the people generally, the latter has been so much damaged in the past during the process of plucking that it was considered desirable to put a stop altogether to the farming of its leaves, and in order to further improve its growth, mutilated specimens to be met within the coupes are no longer to be reserved as standards, as was the practice in former years, for the sake of its fruit. The tembhurni coppices fairly, and if the injured and deformed trees are properly cut and trimmed, and the leaves protected, it ought to yield good timber when it reaches the exploitable age. The main utility of the apta trees lies in its leaf, it being not valuable as timber. It is also very hardy, stands a good deal of knocking about, and does not suffer to the same extent as the tembhurni from harmful treatment. The demand for its leaves is already fairly large, and there is a prospect of its increasing in proportion to the diminished supply of tembhurni leaves, and, therefore, its exploitation has to be restricted.

151. The revenue arising from the farm of toddy palm leaves and fruit varies from Rs. 1,858 to Rs. 1,435, and has shown a tendency to increase. There can be no objection to reserve these products, especially as the *bond-fide* wants of the wild tribes and the people of forest villages are safeguarded.

152. The receipts from beheda nuts has hitherto been small, but the demand may greatly increase in future, as this product is an important one. Moreover, it is not used locally, and in the interest of the trees it is necessary that the collection should be kept under control.

153. In three talukas (Chikhli, Bulsár and Párdi) out of the four in the Surat Division the area under forests is very limited, and the condition of the country and the people so prosperous that it was not deemed advisable to apply the principles for regulating the collection of minor forest products laid down in the Resolution of Government quoted above. The Collector, Mr. Lely, conveyed his approval of this proposal in the following terms :—

"I have the honour to express my entire agreement that no concession should be made as to minor forest produce in the talukas of Chikhli, Bulsár and Párdi. The area of the